



## Quinnipiac River Watershed Association

Before the Environment Committee  
Testimony of David James, Meriden  
Cleanup Coordinator, Quinnipiac River Watershed Association (QRWA)  
In favor of S.B. 661 Feb. 2, 2009

To the proponents of shortsighted return, change is a burden unless it produces immediate personal benefit, even where a greater personal and social benefit would result from that change. Such is the case regarding S.B. 661. I have read arguments pro and con about expanding bottle redemption to include more commonly purchased water products. Relative to the myriad benefits, environmental and financial, for the State of CT, there seems little merit to the retail "burden" argument at the heart of maintaining the status quo.

The bottle bill has been a tremendous success for CT and there is no reason its expansion would not produce equally positive results. Figures I have seen show redemption more than twice as effective as curbside recycling, due in part to away from home consumption. This is exactly the type of legislation state government should be passing. I can personally attest to the proliferation of discarded plastic water containers, as can any observant citizen, because as a walker who has always taken pride in his residential area, I constantly find myself filling garbage bags full of the obnoxious items.

Our organization, Quinnipiac River Watershed Association (QRWA), conducts an annual multi-town cleanup along our waterway and its tributaries. Each cleanup team produces many trash bags of "floatables", principally bottles and cans, that must be raked out of the water's edge and river eddies. They are so abundant that they form rafts on the water where wind or current has placed them. Placing a deposit on these items will make them valuable enough for someone to pick the containers up before they enter the waterway.

Thank you.

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